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or that because we are Nupe'—is quoted in support of widely different and divergent cultural activities. In the riverain districts they tell you: 'The Nupe know only two funeral rites, the ceremony of the Eight Days and the ceremony of the Forty Days; but the Mohammedans have introduced a third ritual, the Hundred-and-twenty Days.' Go to the Nupe round Bida or in Trans-Kaduna, and you learn 'that all Nupe perform the Hundred-and-twenty Days'. In Bida they say that 'no Nupe eats eggs, for they make the women sterile'—but in other districts I have seen people eat eggs and think nothing of it. A contradiction?—only so far as concepts which are never checked against reality can imply contradiction.

I have said already that for certain cultural practices the people admit that no general rule can be formulated and that different sections of Nupe follow different practices. But this admission of differentiation is, with regard to actual facts, no less inaccurate than the comprehensive statement about customs that are 'typically Nupe'. The cultural theory which allows for variants in the tribal culture is no less a theory and no less an ideology. This qualified ideology of cultural unity becomes specially important in connexion with another fact, namely, that the Nupe theory of tribal or cultural unity does not imply a belief in common stock or origin of all members or sections of the tribe. On the contrary, the Nupe assume different origin, and subsequent processes of fusion and sometimes differentiation, to account for the existing tribal sections. The Nupe count eleven or twelve such tribal sections or, as I propose to call them, sub-tribes. Here are their names: Ebe, Gbedye or Gbedegi, Kusopa, Benu, Beni, Dibo or Žitako (also known as Gana-Gana among the Hausa), Kyedye or Kede, Ebagi, Bataci, Kupa, Cekpā, and perhaps also Gwagba—a section formed but recently, something between sub-tribe and political faction. One group in Trans-Kaduna, which is believed to represent the oldest section of Nupe, has no second sub-tribal name; the people refer to themselves only as Nupe, or Nupe *zam*, 'pure Nupe'. In this area no real conception of the sub-tribe exists; the different villages regard themselves as independent cultural units, of independent origin, united only by the one, widest link of tribal membership.

The different sub-tribes are supposed to be not only of different origin but also of different age and to have evolved as sub-tribes at different periods. According to Nupe tradition there were five 'original' sub-tribes in existence at the time of the culture-hero of Nupe, Tsoede, of whom we shall hear more presently, namely the Ebe, Beni, Ebagi, Bataci, and Dibo. The origin of the Kyedye and Gbedegi is linked, in this tradition, with the coming of Tsoede. The riverain Kyedye are supposed to have come with him to Nupe country and to have been settled by him all along the river Niger and established as the Lords of the Water and as local rulers over the aboriginal inhabitants of the area, the marsh-dwelling Bataci. The Gbedegi are believed to have been of Yoruba origin, and to have been Nupe-ized by Tsoede and his men. Cekpā and Kupa, the sub-tribes on the southern bank of the Niger, are said to have lived first in the area north of the river, in Nupe proper, but

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their class origin. There is no sphere of life, not even an ordinary social gathering, in which the representatives of the various classes can meet, as it were, on 'neutral ground'.

The social stratification stretches beyond the formalized rank system embodied in the political structure. It embraces the whole country and absorbs and reinterprets in its own sense the cultural configuration of Nupe at large. On this wider scale the commoners of the town, the people of no name and title, rank higher than the people and tribes outside the capital, with their petty village titles and offices. The citizens of Bida look down upon the *gberiši*, the 'heathen' in the villages, ridiculing their habits and character, their fashions and the way they talk, their lack of education and 'urbanity'.

These differences of customs and habits are real enough. But they are underlined on the part of the Bida people by that credulity and fondness of exaggeration which we encountered already in the discussion of the village community and which, here even more strongly, expresses the biased self-centred interest of a group strongly conscious of its cultural identity. I have recorded many sensational accounts of the religious customs of the *gberiši* in which the Bida people firmly believe, unaware, or unwilling to admit, that they are quite untrue. Bida informants told me that among the peasants and pagans women practise the craft of medicine and not men as in Bida—another statement which I could easily disprove. Or I was warned not to believe anything that villagers say—'they are all liars'. Even if it were possible to test quantitatively this collective libel, it would, I am afraid, hardly reveal any real difference between town and country. What I have called, in the discussion of the village community, an ideology sustaining the assertion of group identity subserves here the assertion of (in a loose sense) class distinctions.

To return to the real, concrete, cultural differences linked with class. The framework of status which we have outlined is filled out with a multitude of minor traits, differences of conduct, extending even to walks of life which may appear only remotely connected with the central political and economic structure. We shall meet with these differences in every stage of our investigation; let me anticipate here a few typical instances as they would strike the observer of Nupe everyday life. He would note class differences even in one of the most elementary wants—nutrition: rich and poor have different food habits. The poor eat little meat, chicken very rarely (unless for religious reasons); but meat cooked in palm-oil is eaten every day by the wealthy, and chicken-and-rice, the most delicious food the Nupe know, comes on the table at least once a week. In Bida the sorghum or millet grain is always milled to fine flour; in some peasant districts it is boiled unmilled—a preparation of food which the more refined despise, although it is undoubtedly of higher nutritive value. The people of Bida drink palm-wine, the peasants in the districts feast on sorghum-beer.

Again, in the matter of recreation: among the peasants the men dance to the music of flutes and drums, or the women sing to the clapping of hands or the beating of upturned calabashes. Among the sophisticated

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the general trend. The same trend is, finally, evident in the Nupe method of keeping sheep and goats.

Sheep and Goats

Very rarely do the Nupe farmers (or town people for that matter) breed sheep and goats. It is, once more, the principle of 'liquid' resources that counts. A great many farmers buy a sheep or goat when it is young, or when sheep and goats are cheap, and sell it again later on with profit, when they are in need of money. Certain regular fluctuations in the price of goats form the basis for this calculation. During the season of the great Mohammedan feasts, when rams are killed in almost every house, prices go up, to fall again during the rainy season, before the harvest, when there is little money coming in and accordingly little demand for animals.[1] This method of husbandry accounts for the very irregular distribution of sheep and goats at a given time, varying greatly with the individual need for money and the ability or inclination to invest money in animals. The general figures *per capita* of sheep and goats are surprisingly low (see the statistical table). The figure for Bida town is 0·12 and for the districts 0·71 per male adult. These figures reflect the very small money resources the Nupe have for engaging in this sort of seasonal trade. Throughout the year, and especially during the time of the Mohammedan festivals, a large number of sheep and goats have, in fact, to be imported from Hausa. But the figures also show that sheep- and goat-keeping is more frequent in the districts than in Bida. This bears out what I have said above about the influence of varied and expanding economic enterprise upon stock-keeping. Bida, though richer than the districts, is poorer in live stock; the centre of trade and of manifold economic interests keeps its capital more liquid than the country with its limited scope of economic prospects.

It is interesting to note in this connexion that in goat- or sheep-breeding the young animals always belong to the owner of the mother-goat or -sheep; the owner of the female animal may ask the owner of the male animal to let him have the animal for breeding, but this would be done without payment or return of any kind, merely as a personal favour. Female animals are accordingly more expensive than male animals, and the inducement to part with the mother-goat thus often overweighs the interest in the breeding itself.

Other Domestic Animals

The Nupe keep no pigs and eat no pork—an avoidance which is not, as far as I see, due only to Mohammedan influence. The few pigs one sees in the country belong to Yoruba.

[1] Prices for sheep and goats vary from 5*s.* to 15*s.*, according to the season (see p. 316). The great seasonal changes are also shown in the figures for sheep and goats slaughtered in Bida in the different months of the year: January, 130; February, 150; March, 82; April, 151; May, 129; June, 68; July, 58; August, 114; September, 116; October, 119; November, 120; December, 122. The highest figures refer to January/February and April, the months of the Mohammedan festivals of *Ramadan* and *Muharram*; the lowest figures to June and July, in the middle of the rains, before the first harvest of the season.

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There is little to be said about fowls. In every house chickens are kept; men and women, grown-ups and children, have their own chicken. Often one sees a young boy going to the market to sell 'his' chicken, given him by father or mother. The fowls are bought and sold regularly in the food-markets of every larger village. Fowls represent the most important sacrificial food of pagan (and to some extent Mohammedan) Nupe; almost every religious ceremony, communal as well as household-rites, involves the killing of a fowl. Chickens are, besides, the most desirable food the Nupe know. Eggs are not marketed and in certain parts of Nupe not eaten. The Beni do not eat eggs because 'they make men sterile and women barren'. The Nupe also keep pigeons, for which they put up a bowl of water on a forked pole inside the house. Pigeons are not as a rule traded in the market, nor are they eaten regularly, but sometimes the eating of pigeons is ordered by diviners for ritual reasons.

Donkeys and Horses

About three-quarters of the donkeys which are found in Nupe belong to Bida town. They are transport animals owned mostly by traders, pack animals used in their caravans which carry palm-oil and salt from the river steamers up country, and bring natron down from Hausa and Bornu. In 1935 the only districts possessing no donkeys were those which have other means of transport: the riverain area, and the district of Mokwa through which the railway runs. Again, the largest number of horses is found in Bida. Horses, as I have said already, are a symbol of rank and status. The *Etsu* Nupe may, as a sign of his highest esteem, present a man with a horse. But every man who can afford it will buy one for himself or for his sons. A horse represents, if not the most profitable, the most noble expenditure or investment.

Yet, profitable in the narrow sense, or in the wider sense as implying enhancement of prestige—all these possibilities of investment of capital in live stock are determined by the amount of liquid capital available; in other words, by the volume of money in circulation. The economic stringency of the country which, starting from the decline in the market prices for native produce in 1934–5, as well as the subsequent recovery in 1936, is reflected clearly in the figures of the census of live stock for Bida Division for the last four years.

	Sheep	*Goats*	*Horses*	*Donkeys*
1933 . .	5,788	28,856	1,196	111
1934 . .	6,600	29,445	1,160	157
1935 . .	5,010	25,876	917	137
1936 . .	5,702	34,751	1,007	149

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rice, and partly ground-nuts) or after it has undergone a rudimentary 'refining' process (such as the threshing and milling of grain, the shelling of ground-nuts, &c.). Side by side with this trade there exists an extensive local trade in the 'finished' product, which means various kinds of prepared food. I cannot attempt a detailed description of the intricate and varied art of Nupe cooking. I will only enumerate the more important products of this native 'food-industry', which, like most food preparation, is in the hands of the women. It is of considerable importance for the economy of the Nupe household. There are three main kinds of such prepared food which are sold everywhere in the markets and streets of the towns and villages of Nupe: (1) a gruel of millet or sorghum, made with water, and called *ekwa* in the more jelly-like and *zambú* in the more solid form. It is eaten for breakfast or lunch, and nicely done up in banana leaves, bought by labourers, canoe-men, travellers, and sometimes farmers going out to their fields—men who are unable to have their meals with their families or to have food brought out to them from home. (2) *Yisá* (Hausa, *fura*), bread-like balls made of late millet or sorghum and rolled in flour. Men and women attending markets are fond of buying this food and eating it with milk which they buy, there and then, from the Fulani women. (3) *Masa*, *kuli-kuli*, *bánkuru*, and *kara*—savouries of different kind, made of beans, sorghum- or millet-flour or ground-nuts, fried in shea-butter and prepared with various spices. They are eaten at any time of the day, practically by everybody who can spare an *anini* (a tenth of a penny).

To turn to the food crops proper. Our chart has established the even distribution of food crops over the year's cycle, a distribution which should, normally, leave every household well provided with food from harvest to harvest. Old yam should last till the new yam is dug out, sorghum and late millet till the new sorghum harvest—or at least till bulrush-millet—is reaped. I have found that June and July are the critical months: yam may begin to give out by the end of May or June, about six weeks or two months before the new yam harvest, and late millet and sorghum may become scarce by the middle of June. But bulrush-millet, which is harvested about that time, and maize, both from inland and marsh-land crops, make the transition easy.[1] So do also fresh ground-nuts, new potatoes, and partly the new rice, all harvested before the late main crops; I have mentioned already the 'stopgap' character of cassava.[2] A dry year, a late or failing harvest of early millet or first yam, may, of course, upset the balance temporarily in a district—till imports from the river area where yam matures earlier, or other districts, which have fared better, set it right again.[3] But the nutritive balance of the country must always remain dependent on the contribution of trade and markets:

[1] See p. 213.

[2] Cassava-flour as a substitute for grain-flour appears on the Nupe markets only for about two months, during July and August. Corn-gruel, a daily food in many Nupe households, can be made with rice-flour instead of sorghum- or millet-flour, if the latter has become scarce. This substitute is more expensive than ordinary corn-gruel, and is also said to be less pleasant to the taste.

[3] In 1936 the first yams appeared on the river markets on 6 July, while inland the first yams were dug out a fortnight later.

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yam, maize, and early millet are not grown everywhere; special crops are cultivated on marsh-land and inland farms; and besides, there is the large population of Nupe which does not live on the land and can obtain its food only from the markets of the country. The Nupe agricultural system, as we have realized already, is adjusted essentially to a highly developed system of exchange and marketing. The surprisingly small number of crops grown exclusively for household consumption is perhaps the most striking proof.

The degree to which the individual farmer, and the farmer in the different districts of the country, adjusts his planting to the principle of exchange economy varies considerably. In the marshes of Niger and Kaduna almost the whole production of rice is intended for sale and export. But at the other end of the scale we find farmers who, able to cultivate a few crops only, have just enough to provide food for their families. We have already examined some of the conditions determining this changing balance between trade crops and food crops. Ultimately it only reflects that greater fundamental balance that underlies Nupe peasant economy: between the need of food for the group, and the need of commodities which are obtainable only by means of exchange, that is, money—which can itself be obtained only from the sale of farming produce.

TREE CULTIVATION AND FRUIT INDUSTRY

As stated in the first chapter, most of the fruit-bearing trees in Nupe are wild growing. Only two or three kinds are cultivated: the kola-nut tree, *ebi*, and to much lesser extent the banana, *yaba*; to these two indigenous plants we must add to-day the European imported mango tree, *mangoro*. In the case of trees the main productive activities refer therefore not so much to the planting and tending of the plants as to the collection of the fruits and the preliminary manufacturing process of the same order as that described in the preceding section. Only in a few cases can the fruits of the trees be utilized directly—for food, cooking, or marketing. Most fruits have to undergo a special 'refining' process before they become marketable or ready for use.

Banana

Only in Bida, Patigi, and Laboži did I see real banana plantations. They are small and of little importance, for bananas have little commercial value in Nupe; they are sold for an extremely low price (a bunch of about twenty for ½*d.* or less)—if they are sold at all. Bananas are eaten raw, and play in Nupe a part comparable to our occasional eating of fruit. In the banana plantations the plants are arranged in a circle of about 6 feet in diameter. The important thing is to plant them very deep in the ground (from 3 to 4 feet), and the whole circle has thus to be excavated to that depth. It is this heavy and slow work—unprofitable work from a commercial point of view—that, according to my informants, discourages the Nupe farmer from growing bananas. In Bida, where the soil is poor, the banana plot has to be manured with animal dung; in the bush plantations and in the forest groves where the banana grows wild the

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Household E

Lemu. Labour unit: father and four sons, two of them married. Family of ten

Crops and trees	*Total yield*	*Kept for household consumption*	*Sold*	*Additional income*
Bulr.-millet	50 loads	20 loads	30 loads for 15*s.*	Family head: trade in rams and sheep.
Late millet	30 „	10 „	20 loads for 10*s.*	Total earnings approx. 10*s.* p.a.
Sorghum	40 „	20 „	20 loads for 13*s.* 6*d.*	Sons: *buca* farmwork. Total earnings approx. 4*s.* p.a.
Beans	6 „	All	..	
Yam	?	A little	8 loads for 4*s.*	
Cassava	?	Eaten at once	..	
Sw. potatoes	?	„ „	..	
Cotton	10 loads	..	All, for 15*s.*	
Red pepper	4 „	..	All, for 8*s.*	
Locust-beans	6 „	..	All, for 4*s.*	

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Income from farm produce	3	9	6
Total income . . . . . approx.	4	0	0
Money expenditure: Tax	2	7	0
Egbe work		6	6
Name-giving ceremony for grandchild . .		8	0
First instalment of bride-price for younger son		17	0

The construction of these household budgets is designed to show the main division of resources into those which are utilized in kind, i.e. for food consumption, and those utilized for exchange, i.e. for the acquisition of commodities and the satisfaction of other, non-nutritive, wants. We have said that the latitude in satisfying wants beyond the 'minimum level' gives us the standards of living and economic stratification.

Now, it is characteristic that Nupe society, which is so conscious of its class stratification, is equally conscious of its economic stratification and the varying standards of living. Even the principle of the 'minimum point' of the scale of values, the existence of a minimum cost of living, is clearly understood and, what is more important, generally accepted. I have worked out questionnaires referring to this minimum standard of living and collected answers from twenty men in Bida and the villages, of different classes and different degree of wealth. They all were in agreement on the essential points. Expressed in agricultural produce, i.e. staple food crops, calculated for a small family of four, the minimum annual cost of living amounts to 12 to 15 bundles of grain (of any variety) or 90 loads of yam, if the household relies on one of the two staple food crops; or, if both are combined, 6 to 8 bundles of grain and 40 to 50 loads of yam. Expressed in money, 1½*d.* per day is the lowest cost of living per adult. But this food, as my informants added, will hardly be nutritive, it would only 'make the belly swell'. With more nutritive food, the lowest cost of living is 3*d.* per day. Even this is not yet a high standard, for it excludes *na ma re na*, things 'that taste nice', e.g. sweetmeats, savouries, and suchlike. For a family of four or five I was given

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the following daily 'menu' corresponding to a standard of living slightly above the minimum:

Morning meal:	corn-water or gruel with 'bread' (*fura*)	1½*d.*
Midday meal:	cassava, beans, or rice	3*d.*
Evening meal:	corn porridge	1½*d.*
Total cost		6*d.*

If fats, shea-butter, or palm-oil are added in form of sauce, the bill increases by another 1½*d.*; meat or fish, the addition of which would raise the meal to a much higher 'standard of living', cost 6*d.* a day extra. For example:

Morning meal:	corn-gruel and ground-nut cakes	1½*d.*–2*d.*
Midday meal:	corn porridge	1½*d.*
	palm-oil, greens, and spices	1–2*d.*
	fish	3*d.*
Evening meal:	rice	4*d.*
	palm-oil, &c. (partly left over from midday meal)	0·3*d.*
	meat or fish	2–3*d.*
Total cost		1*s.* 1·3*d.*–1*s.* 3·8*d.*

Calculating the cost of food for a family of this size for a week and taking into account that the morning meal often consists of food left over from the previous day, and that meat, fish, and certain savouries are only bought occasionally, we arrive at the sum of 8*s.* 9*d.* per week, or 1*s.* 3*d.* per day.

These figures refer to the cost of living in Bida, where the majority of the population have to buy their whole food. But in the village, food other than the staple crops—including fats, fish, and meat—has also to be bought for money. On the other hand, cost of living in the villages is slightly cheaper, as is shown in the following example, which is again calculated for four or five persons, and corresponds to a fairly high standard, comparable to the elaborate Bida 'menu' just quoted:

Morning meal:	corn-gruel and ground-nut cakes	0·8*d.*
Midday meal:	corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices	4*d.*
Evening meal:	the same	4*d.*
Total cost		approx. 9*d.*

The standards of living in the village are also lower than in Bida: an average standard in the village would correspond to a low standard in Bida. Dried fish rather than meat is the main item on the menu, meat being eaten not more than once a week or, in poorer households, once in several weeks. Rice, which appears fairly regularly on the Bida menu, is rare in the village; sorghum-beer, on the other hand, which may replace a regular meal in the village, does not figure on the menu of Bida households. But if the very high standard of living characteristic of the Bida upper classes does not occur in the peasant households, the same is true of the other extreme, the very low standard of living; for although I have found many households in or near Bida which live on the very minimum level, these very low standards seem absent in the village.

Let me give a few concrete examples to illustrate the food economy in

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typical Nupe households. They are taken from four households in Bida (Nos. 1 and 2) and in the country (Nos. 3 and 4). 'Menu' No. 1 is that of a wealthy noble household, No. 2 that of an average trader's household, No. 3 that of a prosperous peasant household in Kutigi (household D in the list of household budgets given above), and No. 4 that of an average peasant household in the same village. All four examples were obtained about the same time, the end of May and beginning of June. B = morning meal (i.e. 'breakfast'), M = midday meal, E = evening meal.

No. 1

19.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and corn-cakes.
M. Rice and fish.
E. Rice and meat with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

20.5.1936.
B. Corn-gruel.
M. Rice and meat with shea-butter, onions, and spices.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

21.5.1936.
B. Corn-gruel and bean-cakes.
M. Rice and chicken.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with greens and spices.

22.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and bean-cakes.
M. Rice and fish.
E. Rice and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

23.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and bean-cakes.
M. Rice and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.
E. Rice and meat, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

24.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and corn-cakes.
M. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.
E. Rice and meat, with palm-oil.

25.5.1936.
B. Corn-gruel.
M. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.
E. Rice and meat, with palm-oil.

No. 2

18.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and ground-nut cakes.
M. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.
E. Rice and meat, with palm-oil.

19.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and ground-nut cakes.
M. Cassava with palm-oil.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

20.5.1936.
B. Beans cooked in thick palm-oil, with salt and pepper.
M. Boiled cassava, with palm-oil.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with shea-butter, greens, and spices.

21.5.1936.
B. Bean-cakes.
M. Corn-porridge and fish, with shea-butter, &c.—left over from previous day.
E. Rice and meat, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

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22.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and corn-cakes.
M. Corn-porridge.
E. Rice and meat, with palm-oil and spices.

23.5.1936.
B. Corn-water and corn-cakes.
M. Rice and fish, with palm-oil.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

24.5.1936.
B. Hot corn-water and corn-cakes.
M. Sweet potatoes and palm-oil.
E. Corn porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

Note that ground-nut cakes, though eaten repeatedly for the morning meal in this household, are absent in Menu No. 1. In the latter household it was explained to me that ground-nuts were 'out of season', and no longer good for making cakes—a culinary distinction which the less well-to-do (and less sophisticated) households do not follow.

No. 3

31.5.1936.
B. Corn-gruel and beans.
M. Yam and beans, with palm-oil, salt, and pepper.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

1.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel and beans.
M. Yam and beans, with palm-oil.
E. Corn-porridge and meat, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

2.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel and beans.
M. Corn-porridge and meat, from previous day.
E. Rice and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

3.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel.
M. Boiled yam with palm-oil.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

4.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel and beans.
M. Beans with palm-oil, salt, and pepper.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

5.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel.
M. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.
E. Rice and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

6.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel.
M. Boiled yam, with palm-oil.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

No. 4

13.6.1936.
B. Corn-water and ground-nut cakes.
M. Cassava.
E. Porridge and fish, with palm-oil (no greens).

14.6.1936.
B. Corn-porridge, from previous day.
M. Corn-porridge, left over from morning meal.
E. Fresh corn-porridge with greens (no fish).

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15.6.1936.
B. Corn-porridge and very little fish (bought for 0·1*d.*), with palm-oil, greens, and spices.
M. Sorghum beer.
E. Corn-water and ground-nut cakes.

16.6.1936.
B. Nothing.
M. Raw cassava.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

17.6.1936.
B. Corn-gruel.
M. Corn-gruel and ground-nut cakes.
E. Corn-porridge and fish, with palm-oil, greens, and spices.

18.6.1936.
B. Hot corn-water and ground-nut cakes.
M. Corn-porridge.
E. Corn-porridge, left over from midday meal.

19.6.1936.
B. Cold corn-water and corn-cakes.
M. Cassava boiled in water.
E. Corn-porridge and palm-oil (no fish).

In examining the budgets from the viewpoint of food economy, we find that in this one domain of wants they are already representative of widely varying standards of living. Measuring the produce available for food consumption in the various households against the standard of 12 to 15 bundles (loads) of grain per family of four, or 3 to 4 bundles of grain per head, we obtain the following relations:

Household A: family of four—13 loads, or over 3 loads per head.
Household B: family of three—12 loads, or 4 loads per head.
Household C: family of four—1 load, or ¼ load per head.
Household D: family of seven—43 loads of grain (also yarn), or over 6 loads per head.
Household E: family of ten—50 loads, or 5 loads per head.

In other words, we find poverty, i.e. 'insufficiency of means', a certain marginal sufficiency, and also ample and prosperous, standards of living.

We can correlate the prosperity in this sense with certain other social factors.[1] The most prosperous households are found in Trans-Kaduna and in the country north of Bida (e.g. Lemu) where land is fertile and plentiful. Households with a large labour-unit are invariably more prosperous than households with a small labour-unit. The budget which expresses real poverty and insufficiency (C) comes from Bida, and from a small labour group whose efficiency was abnormally reduced: one of the two men who formed the labour unit was old and past work in age, and the other an invalid. I have spoken on different occasions of the detrimental effects upon production of the spreading dissolution of the large labour-unit. That a situation such as this could occur, that this prima facie inefficient productive arrangement which leads an old man and

[1] It will be understood that in this as in similar general statements I am referring not only to the selected examples, representative though they are, but to the whole material which I have examined.

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
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4. SOLEMNIZATIONS

We now turn to ceremonials which do not stand on their own, as so many efforts to wield supernatural power for particular ends, but which surround or merge with certain critical mundane events, birth, death, and marriage. For the Nupe, these ceremonials do not represent *kuti*, rituals proper: they do not move the force that is in the universe; nor do they belong to the tools which God granted man for this purpose. The ceremonials of birth, death, or marriage are merely observances, customary ways of dealing with the events in question or, as the Nupe say, 'ways of doing things'. If we call them 'rituals' or 'rites', we are applying our own nomenclature for such procedures. Even so, these 'ways of doing things' involve appeals to God and some link with the whole system of religious ideas; that is, they are *solemnizations* of mundane acts.

(i) *Birth*

The observances bearing on childbirth begin already with conception and culminate, some time after the actual birth, in the naming ceremonial, so that the event of birth is treated, not as a climax, but as one in a series of events or stages. This concern with pre- and post-natal phases corresponds closely to the Nupe conceptions of life and of body and soul; several of the respective observances, however, are neither specifically 'religious' nor explicitly fitted into the 'natural philosophy' of the people, belonging rather to the more indefinite range of notions we commonly call superstitions.

Thus the most auspicious time for conception is laid down, in typical Nupe manner, by numbering the day in question, which should be the fifth after the mother's menses. The night should be young, for a child conceived in the dark of the night, when spirits and witches are abroad, might easily be born misshapen. As soon as the pregnancy is noticeable (in the third month, as the Nupe calculate, or at the latest in the fifth), the parents must discontinue sexual relations; the mother must avoid places inhabited by spirits as well as certain kinds of food which might harm the child: honey would give it adenoids, and a certain fish cause it to have six fingers on one hand. I have already mentioned that the avoidance of cohabitation continues for about three years after the birth of the child, since a new conception and pregnancy might stop the growth of the infant. In addition to these general rules and avoidances, which everyone knows, there may be special ones, ordered by the diviner, whom the expectant father will at once consult.

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
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with which indigenous sacred knowledge was never concerned are now tacitly assumed to be within the ken of mallams. Whenever you ask the 'man in the street' about the origin of the world, about the sun, moon, and stars, or about the rules of the calendar, he will refer you to the mallams—'these are things the mallams know'. More often than not, this trust is sadly misplaced. But as the Nupe lack of interest in mythology admits of one exception, namely, myths or legends about the genesis of Nupe kingdom, so the growth of the Moslem Emirate has become the theme of numerous stories and quasi-mythical traditions.[1] To be sure, they are not Moslem traditions in the strict sense of the word; but they are traditions about the crucial events of Islam as seen through Nupe eyes. In this sense they add to the religious supports which the Fulani Emirate has come to command, much as the pagan kingdom drew some of its strength from the cycle of myths devoted to Tsoede and his miraculous deeds. And in this sense, too, they may be said to 'fill lacunae', that is, to replace a mythology outdated by events.

Among the other features of the Moslem 'way of life' several fit remarkably (and fortuitously) into the pattern of Nupe culture. This is true, for example, of the attitude to representative art, which is absent in Nupe and discouraged by Islam; of certain general rules of marriage, such as the payment of a 'brideprice', the ease of divorce, and the preference for marriage within the kindred;[2] of the custom of circumcision and one of the dietary rules of Islam, the prohibition of eating pig.[3] The ease with which Moslem kinship rites or the Islamic method of divination found a niche in Nupe life has already been discussed.

There are a few exceptions, however. The Nupe preference for *yawó dengi*, marriage within the kindred, refers only to cross-cousin marriage and excludes the marriage of parallel cousins, which Islamic practice permits and recommends; similarly the sororate, common in Moslem countries, is forbidden by traditional Nupe custom; conversely, the Nupe preferential marriage, between a young man and his mother's brother's widow, is unknown to

[1] Some of these have been quoted in *A Black Byzantium*, pp. 78–9.

[2] The Nupe 'brideprice'—*ewó yawó* ('money of marriage')—corresponds to the 'dower' (*Mahr* or *sadaq*) of Islamic law. The ready acceptance of their equivalence is seen in the linguistic usage, the Arabic word *sadeiki* having become almost a synonym for *ewó yawó*.

[3] Strictly speaking, traditional Nupe culture does not taboo the eating of pigs; but there exists a general idiosyncrasy of this kind, and the Nupe do not keep pigs (unlike their Yoruba neighbours). Another dietary rule of Islam, the prohibition of intoxicants, clashes with the great liking of the Nupe for sorghum beer and with the prominent part this drink plays in all sacrifices. The Nupe Moslem have, in fact, abandoned beer for palmwine, which many consider to be exempt from the Qoranic prohibition.

3: Forde E-4 (no date) 1955 FF52 Nupe FF52

438 Plants important for trade and in native industry include cotton, henna (*lali*),
241 and hemp, both introduced from Hausa country, and gourds. The by-products of agriculture, such as grain stalks, are used by the cultivator and his family for making fences, beds, and mats; sorghum stalks yield black and red vegetable dyes. Occasionally large non-fruit-bearing trees are cut down and sold to carpenters.[11]

Organization and Division of Labour

241 A two-fold principle of collective family work (*efakó*) and individual work
476 (*bucá*) applies to farm labour, and to its products, income, and granaries. Each male member of the household owns a *bucá* farm, while all work on the *efakó* farm, the produce of which is stored in the *efakó* granaries, the head controlling the disposal. Sometimes forms of productive labour other than farm work are organized according to the *efakó* system, e.g., indigo-dyeing at Mokwa.

All those who share in the *efakó* group work are housed, clothed, and fed, and have their tax and marriage payments met by the household head, who also supplies tools and pays for their repair. Personal requirements beyond this are paid for from the proceeds of the *bucá* work. The present tendency is for large *efakó* groups to disintegrate on the death of the household head, the members of the group demanding a larger measure of freedom than the *efakó* system provides.

Mutual assistance and large-scale collective labour is of two types: *egbe*, for *efakó* farm work (mainly tilling and weeding), and for work for the community as a whole, e.g., building or roofing of a chief's house, repair of a bush bridge or road or of a town wall or the N.A. rest-house, etc. *Egbe* farm work is, on the whole, performed by younger people, often members of one or more of the age-set associations; it is accompanied by drummers and musicians and concludes with a feast. Help is generally enlisted for tilling and for the first and second weeding, and *egbe* is performed first and on the largest scale on the chief's farm.

The second type of mutual assistance—*dzolo*—is less important. It is an arrangement among a number of farmers to work on each other's farms in turn, usually for the harvesting of groundnuts, cotton, and beans.

464 Wage labour (*kantsú*; Hausa, *lada*) plays an insignificant part in Nupe production. It is found only in large commercial centres, such as Kacha and Jebba, and in Bida for temporary employment only.

462 Women do practically no farm work, but they undertake the processing of agricultural produce for market and the actual marketing, and the exploitation of the shea-nut tree is entirely in the hands of women.[12]

Floor-beating is an important women's task and is made something of a ceremony. While the old women pour water on to it the young women beat the floor with wooden beaters wrapped in rugs in time to the rhythm of drums.[13]

Livestock

231 Cattle are of minor importance in Nupe economy. They are owned only by
[422 butchers who buy from Bornu and Fulani traders. The cattle are of the northern humped breed and are not immune from trypanosomiasis. Sheep are rarely kept for breeding but are fattened and sold.

[242 No pigs are kept and no pork is eaten.[14] Every household keeps chickens
[492 which are bought and sold regularly in the food markets of all the larger villages.
554 Eggs are not marketed and are eaten only rarely in Nupe country. Donkeys are kept as transport animals. Horses (mainly in Bida) are a symbol of high rank and status.[15]

[11] Nadel, 1942, pp. 59, 230–7, 238, 205–14; Line, 1947: Temple 1919, p. 236.
[12] Nadel, 1942, pp. 241–56.
[13] Malam Aliyu Bida, notes, ed. P. G. Harris
[14] Pigs were reported in Sharagi (Share) in 1918 and Pategi in 1912 (Notes by Biscoe and Budgen).
[15] Nadel, 1942, pp. 201–4.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922

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557 as far east as Awtun (Ekiti), and from Yagba District to Ilorin.
588 *"A wealthy woman trader would sometimes go through the
851 form of marriage with one or more young women—reputed virgins.
425 These 'wives' she would send out to various neighbouring villages, ostensibly trading. When, in the expected course of events, these 'wives' formed illicit attachments, a careful note was made of the resultant progeny. When the children had reached five or six years, or more, they were claimed by the woman 'husband' as her children, based on the legal fiction of all legal wives' children being the children of the legal 'father.' In almost every case, the real father compounded with the legal 'father,' in the customary value of the child. The profit to the woman capitalist was exceedingly great.

557 "This custom is not confined to the pagan, nor to the female
586 sex. Many a reputed Mussulman (Bida-Pategi) will allow his
851 wife to go on three and four years' trading expeditions, fully
425 cognisant of the inevitable results. In due time he will apply for the custody of the children, which are legally his until his wife has sued for and obtained a legal divorce, which last is seldom done, owing (in Nupe and Ilorin generally) to the high 'dowry' money claimed. If the case is settled out of Court, the husband enjoys substantial profits. On the other hand, if the wife and children return to him, which is seldom nowadays, he can always obtain a respectable 'dower' from the suitors to the girl children. As to the boys, he finds every use for them on his farm."

595 The first wife is the head one, and advises the other women on all household and commercial matters, and they have to apply to her for permission to leave the compound. Each wife has her own hut, but all the women have their meals together, when they sit round the pot in a circle, in strict order of precedence, counting from the right hand of the first wife. Next her is the second wife, next her the third wife, next her the fourth wife, then come their daughters and foster-daughters in order of age, dependants and slaves. The first wife helps herself and passes the pot round
[554] the table, hands only being used—she alone may sit upright, while the others are obliged to crouch in her presence.

264 There are three meals in the day, at 7 a.m, mid-day, and sun-
●262 down, each meal consisting of one dish only. For breakfast they have "fura," a sort of porridge, with cow's milk where it is obtainable,
[472] (The Nupe will not drink goat's milk, though they eat its flesh.) At noon the poorer people have porridge again, the well-to-do have guinea-corn, or rice, mixed with soup. Supper is the principal meal, when soup is made with guinea-corn or rice, and any meat or fish that may be available.

* Mr. E. C. Duff.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922

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The men eat together in a similar way, but apart from the women, and tiny boys may feed with either. Any snacks such as honey-cakes, or fruit, are eaten at odd times in the day, and water is always drunk after meals, not at them. Eggs were never eaten, but the practice of doing so is gradually creeping in.

In the ordinary routine of life people get up at 4 or 5 a.m., observe salla, and go about their respective avocations which, with a two hours' interval at mid-day, they pursue until 6 p.m. when they again make salla and have their evening meal. This ended, the children, boys and girls alike, go and dance in the market, from which they are retrieved by their elders, with some difficulty, about 9 p.m. and sent to bed. The men pay each other visits, and sit talking in groups of three or four till about 11 p.m., or on bright nights as long as the moon is up. Women do the same, but in their own compounds. They do not pay many visits, but go to see their mothers once every month and their sisters more rarely. Their husbands encourage friendship between their wives and the wives of their friends. If a man is at home when his wife receives a visitor he salutes her and goes out, and when he goes to visit his friend he goes in to salute the women of the house, and then either sits outside with his friend or goes to his hut. A man is expected to call on his parents-in-law every Friday, the Muhammadan holiday, but is never accompanied by his wife, unless it is to accuse her of some ill deed.

The incoming of the Muhammadan New Year is a time for great rejoicing. On New Year's Eve everyone eats as much as he or she can hold, and the poor can ask for a meal from anyone. Next day they make prayer, and everyone contributes in alms according to his means, with a minimum of a hundred cowries, which the Mallams distribute amongst the needy. A Mallam then foretells events of general interest for the coming year, when the rains will come, and whether they will be heavy or light, the success of the crops, whether there will be much sickness and in what months, whether there will be fertility amongst the stock, and amongst the people, and the best month for the purposes, etc. It is a day for visiting amongst the grown-ups, and calls are made on all persons of importance. On their return from prayer the children play a game. They may raid the houses of any uncle or aunt, grandparent, or one following the same trade as their father, and take anything they can lay hands on, unless and up to the time the person raided gives each child twenty cowries. The elders may not defend their own property, but the children of the household do, and battles are waged between the young people. This custom is dying out where there are white men.

Other games played by the children are hide-and-seek and king-of-the-castle, but they rarely have toys, and never balls.